S 9345.2

Received July 1980

1980

IN THE LABOR FORCE

Mississippi
Employment
Security
Commission

Research and Statistics
Department

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INTRODUCTION

Recent economic trends have focused an increasing amount of attention on the position of young people in the world of work. A somewhat erratic economy has brought about an increase in the number of persons out of work. The unskilled and the inexperienced worker (categories into which many youths fall) are generally among the first to find themselves without employment when the economy falters. The purpose of this publication will be to provide current data on youths in the labor force and to present employment, career, and other economic information of value to young people. In the interest of uniformity, "youth" will be defined as persons between the ages of sixteen and twenty-two. It is felt that this age group contains nearly all persons who have a place in the labor force, yet fit the generally accepted concept of youth. This publication will be revised periodically as needed. Any comments or suggestions relating to content or format will be welcomed.

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION

In terms of sheer numbers alone, youths are making their presence known. Since 1960, Mississippi's youth population has risen from less than 240,000 to a projected total of over 350,000 for Fiscal Year 1981. (See table A.) The proportion of youths within the total population has also increased dramatically. Whereas the 16 to 22 age bracket accounted for only 10.9 percent of the populace in 1960 and 13.0 percent in 1970, it is anticipated that the proportion will reach 14.3 percent for FY 1981. A corresponding rise has occurred and should continue to occur in the number of youths in the labor force. Most segments of the youth population have shown significant increases in the degree of labor force participation since 1960. (See table B.) This is especially true of females, both white and nonwhite. In short, more and more people are entering the world of work at an early age, either on a full or part-time basis.

EMPLOYMENT vs. UNEMPLOYMENT

It is estimated that for FY 1981 just over 17 percent of Mississippi's labor force will be between 16 and 22 years of age. Out of a total labor force of 1,018,500, roughly 175,000 will be youths. Of these youths over 63,600 will be minority race members, while about 77,100 will be females. (See table C.) It is further estimated that the unemployed segment of the labor force will number some 67,220. Persons under the age of 23 will account for nearly 24,000 of the jobless, a highly disproportionate 35.7 percent of the total. This can be partially explained by the fact that the

youthful worker generally is less skilled, less experienced and has little job seniority. When job layoffs occur, youths are often among the first to go. For similar reasons they are among the last to be reemployed. As a result, unemployment rates for youths are considerably higher than for older workers. The rates are projected to range from 12.6 percent for 20 to 22 year olds, to 13.8 percent for 18 to 19 year olds, and 16.8 percent for the 16 to 17 year age group. White youths should have considerably lower unemployment rates than minority race young people. Females will have somewhat higher rates than their male counterparts. (See Table D.) Youth unemployment rates are also apt to range much higher during summer months because of the influx of students into the job market. Even when the economy is healthy there simply are not enough jobs available to accommodate all the young people who want to work while school is out. It is projected that some 69,820 different youths who want to work will be out of a job at some time or other during FY 1981. (See Table E.) About 41.0 percent of these will be minority group members; about the same proportion will be females.

Based on past trends, it is further anticipated that a solid majority of youths will not work a full year during FY 1981. (See Table F.) Less than 20.0 percent will work for 50 weeks or more. About 15.3 percent will work for three months or less and over two out of five will not work at all during FY 1981. Whites and males are more likely to be fully employed, while females and nonwhites will have larger percentages who will not work at all during the year. In looking at the overall position of youths within the civilian labor force, it becomes obvious that a young person entering the world of work for the first time is not without problems. However, these

problems can be lessened by good, solid, prior planning. To help Mississippi's youths be better prepared to enter the labor force, the rest of this publication will be devoted to giving information on what to do and what to expect when entering the permanent job market for the first time.

PLANNING A CAREER

Generally speaking, young people have not been encouraged to develop long range career plans for themselves. Many make the mistake of assuming that a good paying job in exactly the field they want will be waiting for them as soon as they reach a certain age or as soon as they complete their education. Such things do not happen automatically. It takes both planning and preparation. One of the keys to a successful career is the development of personal employment goals. Personal preferences as well as individual capabilities should be examined carefully and, above all, honestly. The young career seeker should ask himself or herself such questions as:

1. How many hours a week do I want to work? Some jobs require very long hours. You must decide how much time you are willing to devote to work.

2. Am I willing to travel or relocate? Travel to new places may sound exiciting but it can also be very lonely. Many youths have never been far from home and it is a very big step to consider.

3. What are my personal strengths and weaknesses?

Everyone knows what they do best but many are reluctant to admit weaknesses. Both must be considered if a proper career choice is to be made.

4. Do I need further training or education? Education or vocational training is not always the answer, but it often helps. Talking to people already working in a field may help to answer this question.

5. What problems might I encounter? Anticipating problems often helps solve them. Know what to expect about a job by talking to those who know. Surprises aren't always pleasant.

Any career plan should be realistic, flexible, and open to revision. Don't "put all your eggs in one basket." Be ready with an alternate career choice if you find your first choice is not practical. The young worker can find job happiness and personal fulfillment only if willing to make a firm commitment to reaching the goals he or she has set.

There is one final factor which should be taken into consideration before making a choice of occupation. Personal preferences and individual skills must be weighed against labor market demands and supplies. Changes which directly influence employment needs are constantly occurring in business, industry, education, and government. These changing needs must be taken into account. To help Mississippi's youths be aware of these changing occupational needs, the next section deals with employment opportunity projections through 1982.

OCCUPATIONAL NEEDS

Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Industry employment in Mississippi is projected to increase from the almost 725,000 recorded in 1976 to nearly 889,000 by the year 1982. This means that around 27,000 workers will be added each year. Over this six-year period approximately 164,000 new job openings will be created due to industry expansion. An estimated 157,000 additional workers will be needed to replace those who retire, die, or leave the labor market permanently for other reasons. This adds up to a total of some 321,000 available job openings during the 1976 - 1982 period.

Neither white nor blue - collar occupational categories are expected to increase in employment as rapidly as service occupations. A gain of some 32 percent is anticipated for service workers, while white - collar and blue - collar jobs should grow by 22 and 21 percent respectively. Further analysis indicates that the "Operatives" group of occupations will require the largest number of workers through 1982 - about 35,200. "Service Workers" is the next largest group at 28,000, followed by "Clerical Workers" with 27,600, "Professional, Technical, and Kindred" with 19,900, "Crafts and Kindred" with 18,800, and "Managers and Officals" with 13,700. The groups requiring the fewest workers include "Laborers, Except Farm", needing 11,700 workers, and "Sales Workers", requiring only 9,200 people.

Latest enrollment figures indicate that Mississippi's high school enrollment declined by 1.3 percent from the previous year, probably because of the decline in the birthrate during the 1960's. College enrollment, on the other hand, rose by 2.5 percent. All of the college level gains were attributed to first year students, especially those enrolled at public junior colleges.

The heavy attrition rate after one year of college could indicate that many students are pursuing short-term vocational courses instead of traditional academic studies. This trend may be healthy. Only a small portion of anticipated job openings will require a college degree. Most of these will be in the educational, medical, or engineering occupations. There should also be a substantial number of jobs where a degree would be helpful, but not explicitly required. These would include such occupations as drafters, clergy, editors, reporters, and computer programmers. The vast majority of workers needed over the next few years can get by without going to college. Many jobs won't even require a high school diploma, substituting vocational education or on-the-job training. A brief analysis of the needs of each major occupational group follows.

PROFESSIONAL, TECHNICAL, & KINDRED

This group should grow from a total of 112,420 to about 132,300 by 1982. It ranks fourth in terms of total numbers needed over the six year period, requiring over 7,300 new employees per year. Most of the faster growing occupations are in the health field. However, the largest single need will be for teachers - about 2,300 per year. About 45.0 percent of all openings should be due to expansions and 55.0 percent because of permanent separations. Most jobs in this field require substantial educational preparation.

MANAGERS AND OFFICIALS

This occupational group should rank sixth in anticipated needs through 1982. An estimated 28,900 jobs will be available over the six year period. This includes 2,290 job expansions per year and 2,530 replacements. There is no single occupation requiring an unusually large number of workers.

It is becoming more and more common for employers to require a college degree of beginning managers. Degrees in business administration, accounting, economics, or finance are especially desired. Many large firms conduct management training schools of their own. Advancement to high level management jobs often occurs after several years of progressively more responsible work experience.

SALES WORKERS

Future needs in this category should average about 3,260 per year making it eighth largest in terms of needs. The minimum educational requirements for sales careers vary widely. Some positions require no formal education, others require a degree in a technical or scientific field. Even for routine sales jobs, however, a high school diploma is a definite asset for the beginner. Training for most sales jobs is generally received on the job, such as in retail stores.

CLERICAL AND KINDRED WORKERS

By 1982 it is projected that this group will number around 146,700 persons, making it second largest in overall size. It is expected to rank third in terms of total needs, requiring 8,580 new employees per year. A miscellaneous category of "secretaries" will be the single occupation requiring the most people. All but the most routine clerical positions require graduation from high school. Most employers consider further instruction in business subjects as a particularly good qualification. Such instruction may be obtained generally either in high school or a specialized business school.

CRAFT AND KINDRED WORKERS

With a projected estimate of 113,400 by 1982, this category of workers should be third largest in total employment. It should place fifth in total new employees needed with 33,900 job openings anticipated between 1976 and 1982. Most of the openings will be for skilled workers. The single occupation having the most job openings will be carpenters or carpenter apprentices. There will also be many openings for work supervisors. A large majority of skilled workers learn their trade by informal on-the-job training, though a good number learn via apprenticeship or other formal training. Most authorities recommend a formal apprenticeship program lasting from two to six years as the best way to learn a skilled trade.

OPERATIVES

Employment - wise, this group should remain the largest with about 192,500 employees in 1982. Its future needs are also the greatest, accounting for 18.5 percent of the total needs. Sewers and stitchers, and assemblers are the specific occupations which should have need for the most new workers. They will require 1,330 and 1,440 people per year, respectively. Operatives normally receive only brief on-the-job training. The simplest, most routine jobs can be learned in a day and mastered in a week. Even the more skilled jobs take only a few months to learn. The most important job qualification is the ability to learn new tasks quickly. Formal education is seldom a necessity.

SERVICE WORKERS

By 1982 this category should number about 116,000, making it fifth in size. It should rank second in terms of workers needed, requiring about 9,370 persons per year. Food service workers, such as cooks, waiters, and kitchen helpers should make up a large part of the total need. Training requirements vary greatly among the service occupations. A high school diploma is always an advantage, but many service jobs require no formal education. Only a few require a college degree or other specialized training.

LABORERS, EXCEPT FARM

Nonfarm laborers should rise to a total of 72,600 by 1982, making it the seventh largest group. In terms of need this group will rank seventh, needing about 4,650 per year. The single identifiable occupation in this group that will have the most openings is Helper, Trades. Much of the work performed by nonfarm laborers involves very little special training. Brief instructions and a few hours of on-the-job training are usually sufficient.

Occupational needs are summarized in Table H. For more complete analysis, a publication entitled Occupational Needs in Mississippi, 1976 - 1982 is now available. Copies can be secured by contacting the Research and Statistics Department, Mississippi Employment Security Commission, P.O. Box 1699, Jackson, Mississippi, 39205.

SEARCHING FOR EMPLOYMENT

The right choice of career is only one step in the search for job happiness. Once a choice is made and your preparation for work is complete you still have to find a place to work.

Looking for a job can be a frustrating experience for an unemployed person, especially if the job seeker is a new entrant into the labor force (as many youths are) and doesn't know where to begin. The same applies to those laid off or terminated from a job, particularly those who have held the same job for a long while. It is important not to put things off. Begin the search for employment as soon as possible. The search should be an organized venture, starting with a short, well written resume if a professional or administrative position is desired. On nonprofessional or nontechnical job searches it is still a good idea to write out your personal data, experience, and training and take it with you. This will aid you in filling out job applications, enabling you to do so with greater speed and accuracy.

Investigate all sources for job opportunities. Friends and business acquaintances can be of tremendous help in finding possible job openings. Newspaper ads are another useful tool for the unemployed youth. The ads usually specify the manner in which they should be answered. If they don't, a short, well written letter outlining your qualifications is an excellant way to respond. Employment agencies, both public and private, are also aware of job opportunities. Private agencies generally charge a fee for their services. The Mississippi State Employment Service operates Job Service offices throughout the state. These offices handle hundreds of jobs daily and charge no fees to either job seekers or employers.

An employment interview is required for the vast majority of jobs. The interview is probably the most important single step in landing a job. Listed below are some suggestions to make an interview go smoothly.

1. Know yourself - your qualifications and interests.
2. Learn something about the firm. You may be considered more valuable by an employer if you show knowledge of his or her business.
3. Check your personal appearance.
4. Be punctual - arrive a little early if possible.
5. Be alert, but relaxed.
6. Answer questions in a friendly, positive manner.
7. Take your resume with you if you have one.
8. Be honest - don't oversell or undersell yourself.

SPECIAL EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH

Today's young people are faced with a variety of employment related problems. In addition, individual needs vary widely. Many youths who remain in school are in need of summer work to supplement family income or to finance further education. Others who have completed their educations have trouble competing for jobs with more experienced workers. Still others have dropped out of school and are unsure of what the future holds for them in regard to employment. Many of these needs and problems have been addressed by Congress over the past several years. In 1977, the Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act (YEDPA) was signed into law. It provided for four new training and employment programs as well as expressing continued commitment to improve and expand Job Corps and the Summer Program for Economically Disadvantaged Youth. A brief description of each of these youth oriented programs follows:

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS (YETP) - This program provides a variety of employment and supportive services for youth ages 16 to 21 who meet certain income criteria. It authorizes such services as classroom or on-the-job training, testing, job placement, and work experience programs. Emphasis is on developing relationships between educational systems and employment and training agencies.

YOUNG ADULT CONSERVATION CORPS (YACC) - This year-round program provides up to one year of employment for out-of-school youth ages 16 to 23. There is no income level required for eligibility. Participants work on environmental projects to improve public parks, forests,and recreational areas. Through an inter-agency agreement, the Departments of Agriculture and Interior select workers referred to them by the Department of Labor.

YOUTH INCENTIVE ENTITLEMENT PILOT PROJECTS (YIEPP) - The purpose of this program is to determine if guaranteed employment will serve as an incentive to disadvantaged youth to either remain in school or return to school. The pilot projects are to study the feasibility of guaranteed jobs and the overall impact on high school return, retention, and completion rates. It is open to low income youths aged 16 to 19 years. There are only 17 such projects nationwide, one of which is in Mississippi.

YOUTH COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS (YCCIP)- This YEDPA program has as its objective the employment of 16 to 19 year olds in work projects which are for the benefit of the community. Priority is given to projects organized and operated by community or neighborhood groups. Participants are given on-the-job training in most instances.

JOB CORPS - This long running program provides disadvantaged youth aged 16 to 21 with remedial education, vocational training, counseling, and health services at residential centers located throughout the nation. The program is designed to help the severely disadvantaged young person become a responsible, job-holding, productive adult.

SUMMER PROGRAM FOR ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED YOUTH (SPEDY)- This program provides summertime employment to low income youths, aged 14 to 21, in both the public and private sectors. Employment is generally part-time and for minimum wages. The intent is to provide work experience that will prepare the young person for future employment while helping also to meet financial needs.

Even with good planning, an intelligent career choice, and a successful job search, employment problems may not be ended for all time. The overall state of our economy changes from month to month and year to year. Poor economic conditions often result in cutbacks in employment. As mentioned earlier, young workers are often caught in layoffs due to a lack of job seniority. Most young people are not well informed about what to expect should they become jobless. By getting answers to certain questions before a layoff occurs, you can be better prepared to cope with unemployment. For example: Are you eligible to file for unemployment compensation? If so, do you know where to file? Will you receive any severance pay or unused vacation pay? Most employers would be happy to answer such questions.

CONCLUSION

It is hoped that information presented in this publication has been of value to those who deal with career counseling and training of young people. It is further hoped that it has also been an aid to Mississippi's youth in evaluating their relationship to the world of work. Any comments, questions or requests for further copies should be directed to the Mississippi Employment Security Commission, Research and Statistics Department, P.O. Box 1699, Jackson, Mississippi, 39205. Telephone: 601-961-7451

TABLES

TABLE A

MISSISSIPPI POPULATION

WHITE

AGES	MALE 1960	1970	1981*	FEMALE 1960	1970	1981*
Under 16	207,780	207,860	195,650	197,460	197,710	185,440
16 - 19	45,180	54,610	61,920	40,940	51,290	58,440
20 - 22	24,910	34,930	41,990	24,190	34,660	39,720
Over 22	347,140	386,780	450,500	369,950	427,080	517,480
TOTAL	625,010	684,180	750,060	632,540	710,740	801,500

NONWHITE

AGES	MALE 1960	1970	1981*	FEMALE 1960	1970	1981*
Under 16	208,040	171,920	161,530	206,340	171,030	159,630
16 - 19	35,910	40,880	45,370	35,320	40,740	45,050
20 - 22	14,960	14,500	30,220	16,790	17,360	29,950
Over 22	184,010	162,480	200,110	219,220	203,080	249,580
TOTAL	442,920	389,780	437,230	477,670	432,210	484,210

* Projected

TABLE B

MISSISSIPPI

YOUTH LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES

WHITE

	MALES			FEMALES		
AGES	1960	1970	1981*	1960	1970	1981*
16 - 17	31.9	27.6	41.3	14.7	13.2	29.4
18 -19	60.7	57.1	61.5	36.2	38.3	51.7
20 - 22	75.1	74.3	74.0	38.8	47.4	61.0

NONWHITE

	MALES			FEMALES		
AGES	1960	1970	1981*	1960	1970	1981*
16 -17	32.6	15.0	24.8	14.4	8.0	21.8
18 -19	56.2	39.7	45.5	25.1	23.8	35.2
20 - 22	73.6	63.9	61.8			54.0

* Projected

TABLE C

MISSISSIPPI

LABOR FORCE BY AGE, RACE, AND SEX
FY 1981*

AGES	ALL INDIVIDUALS	MALES		FEMALES	
		WHITE	NONWHITE	WHITE	NONWHITE
16 - 17	31,960	12,780	5,620	8,650	4,910
18 - 19	52,490	19,030	10,310	15,220	7,930
20 - 22	90,140	31,080	18,670	24,210	16,180
Over 22	843,910	328,300	134,380	258,220	123,010
TOTAL	1,018,500	391,190	168,980	306,300	152,030

* Projected

TABLE D

MISSISSIPPI

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT
FY 1981*

AGES	ALL INDIVIDUALS		MALE				FEMALE			
			WHITE		NONWHITE		WHITE		NONWHITE	
	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate
16 - 17	5360	16.8	1500	11.7	1500	26.7	970	11.2	1390	28.3
18 - 19	7250	13.8	1530	8.0	2060	20.0	1520	10.0	2140	27.0
20 - 22	11370	12.6	1620	5.2	3390	18.2	1960	8.1	4400	27.2
Over 22	43240	5.1	8190	2.5	10440	7.8	9980	3.9	14630	11.9
TOTAL	67220	6.6	12840	3.3	17390	10.3	14430	4.7	22560	14.8

* Projected

TABLE E

MISSISSIPPI

NUMBER OF DIFFERENT YOUTHS UNEMPLOYED
FY 1981*

AGES	ALL INDIVIDUALS	MALE		FEMALE	
		WHITE	NONWHITE	WHITE	NONWHITE
16 - 17	15,500	7,220	2,590	2,840	2,850
18 - 19	19,890	7,360	3,680	4,460	4,390
20 - 22	34,430	13,640	6,050	5,740	9,00
TOTAL YOUTH	69,820	28,220	12,320	13,040	16,240

* Projected

TABLE F

MISSISSIPPI

YOUTH BY NUMBER OF WEEKS WORKED
FY 1981*

WEEKS WORKED	MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL
	WHITE	NONWHITE	WHITE	NONWHITE	
50 - 51	26,290	11,760	15,710	12,910	66,670
48 - 49	6,050	0	3,620	990	10,660
40 - 47	4,430	8,520	5,260	4,870	23,080
27 - 39	11,930	1,940	4,980	2,870	21,720
14 - 26	7,820	6,560	6,070	6,000	26,45.
1 - 13	13,030	10,360	20,450	9,450	53,290
None	33,030	35,320	41,190	36,780	146,320
TOTAL	102,580	74,460	97,280	73,870	348,190

* Projected

TABLE G

MISSISSIPPI

HIGH SCHOOL AND UNDERGRADUATE COLLEGE ENROLLMENT*

High School	1978 - 79	1979 - 80	Percent Change
Freshmen	47,240	46,550	- 1.5
Sophomores	43,740	43,930	+ 0.4
Juniors	37,240	38,050	+ 2.2
Seniors	35,990	33,520	- 6.9
TOTAL	164,210	162,050	- 1.3
College			
Freshmen	36,560	41,950	+ 14.7
Sophomores	21,320	19,600	- 8.1
Juniors	12,920	12,140	- 6.0
Seniors	12,460	11,640	- 6.6
TOTAL	83,260	85,330	+ 2.5

* Fulltime Students Only

TABLE H

SUMMARY OF OCCUPATIONAL NEEDS

OCCUPATIONAL GROUP	EMPLOYMENT 1976	EMPLOYMENT 1982	PERCENT GROWTH 1976 - 1982	OPENINGS PER YEAR
Professional, Technical and Kindred	112,400	132,300	+ 17.7	7,290
Managers and Officials	55,600	69,300	+ 24.6	4,810
Sales Workers	36,700	45,900	+ 25.1	3,260
Clerical Workers	119,100	146,700	+ 23.2	8,580
Operatives	157,500	192,500	+ 22.2	9,910
Service Workers	87,900	116,000	+ 31.9	9,370
Laborers, except Farm	60,900	72,600	+ 19.3	4,650
Craft and Kindred	9[illegible],600	113,400	+ 19.9	5,650